

March 25, 2009 - Rep. Slaughter's National Women's Rights History Project Act Passes House

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Slaughter's Bill to Recognize Women Suffragists in Western NY Included in Omnibus Public Lands Bill

Washington, DC - Congresswoman
Louise M. Slaughter (D-NY-28), Chairwoman of the House Committee on Rules and
former Chair of the Congressional Women's Caucus, today applauded the House passage of the 2009 Omnibus Public

Land

Management Act, which included her National Women's Rights History Project Act. Congresswoman Slaughter authored this legislation to preserve and promote historic sites in Western New York that are critical to the suffrage movement and our nation's history.

"Our nation's foremothers stood up to injustice and by changing the course of history, opened the doors of opportunity for all America's daughters," Rep. Slaughter said. "I am proud that the people who worked tirelessly to bring about women's equality are finally recognized for their historic accomplishments."

Originally

introduced in 2002 by Congresswoman Slaughter, the National Women's Rights History Project Act creates a drivable women's history trail, expands the national online database of women's history sites, and establishes a partnership network to fund relevant educational programs.

"This bill will provide Americans with the opportunity to learn more about the heroines who devoted their lives to equality for women," Rep. Slaughter added.

Congresswoman

Slaughter's legislation is one of more than 160 bills included in the bipartisan omnibus lands bill, a package of provisions to expand federally protected land, water, and historic landmarks.

BACKGROUND

The National Women's Rights History Project Act does the following:

- Creates
a Women's History Trail: This bill will establish an auto-friendly trail linking women's suffrage movement sites between Syracuse, NY through the Finger Lakes region and to Rochester, NY. The route was designed to allow access to many of the most prominent sites of the women's movement, including Seneca Falls and Waterloo, where the first women's rights conventions were planned and held.

- Expand
National Online Registry of Key Women's History Sites: The bill will expand the current National Registry travel itinerary website, "Places Where Women Made History," to include additional historic sites. Currently, only 44 percent of the 298 sites nationwide that are relevant to women's rights are listed on the national register of historic places. Of those, only 57 are national historic landmarks. Moreover, many of the register sites have not been evaluated for their association with women's history but rather are on the registry because they are significant in other areas.

- Establishes
a National Women's Rights History Project Partnership: The bill will require the Department of Interior to establish a partnership-based network to offer financial and technical assistance for interpretive and educational program development of national women's rights history.

The Project Partnership would be managed by a non-governmental entity to provide grants and technical assistance for educational and preservation purposes.

More information on the 2009 Omnibus Public Land Management Act:

- This bipartisan omnibus public lands bill is a package of more than 160 bills that enjoy wide support in Congress. Many of these bills have previously passed through the House of Representatives. It includes measures introduced in the last Congress by both Democrats and Republicans in the House and Senate

- Many of the provisions have been developed with extensive collaboration at federal, state, county, and local levels, in conjunction with elected officials, businesses, community leaders, outdoor enthusiasts, and other stakeholders.

- Among its many provisions, this omnibus bill permanently codifies the National Landscape Conservation System; creates two million new acres of wilderness across 9 states; establishes 3 new national park units; designates 1,000 miles of wild and scenic rivers; designates a National Monument and 4 National Conservation Areas; protects world-class hunting land in the Wyoming Range; and recognizes new Historic Sites and Heritage Areas.

- The conservation designations in the bill will provide important economic benefits for

rural economies across the United States. By providing jobs in recreation and tourism, increasing local property values, and providing attractive places for residents to live and work, wilderness designation provides significant benefits to local economies. Nationwide, outdoor recreation contributes \$730 billion to the U.S. economy, while supporting 6.5 million jobs.

- This bill is an authorization bill and does not appropriate any money from the federal treasury.

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